

## Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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R 211802Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2849

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PORT

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4571

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BB, NA, GY, JM, MB, BF, NS, HA, TD, DR

SUBJECT: JAMAICA'S BAD PRESS IN US, MEXICO, AND NICARAGUA

REFERENCE: STATE 255822

1. DURING OCTOBER 20 MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTRY PERMSEC FRANK FRANCIS AND CHARGE ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS, FORMER EXPRESSED IN SOMBER TONES CONTINUING GOJ CONCERN FOR THE "PRESS CAMPAIGN" IN THE US AGAINST JAMAICA AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT IS NOW SPREADING TO LATIN AMERICA. FRANCIS CITED SPECIFICALLY THE STORIES IN THE MEXICAN AND NICARAGUAN PRESS CONCERNING THE ALLEGED TRANSIT THROUGH JAMAICA TO NICARAGUA OF CUBAN-TRAINED GUERRILLAS AND FACT NEWS STORIES HAD CITED "US INTELLIGENCE SOURCES" AS BASIS FOR FOREGOING. HE COMMENTED THAT PM MANLEY AND FONMIN THOMPSON ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED REGARDING THIS NEW PRESS TREND AND NOTED THAT LATTER HAD TAKEN UP THE MATTER NOT ONLY WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS IN WASHINGTON BUT ALSO WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AT A LUNCHEON IN NEW YORK.

2. FORTUITOUSLY WE HAD JUST RECEIVED REFTEL AND FRANCIS  
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WAS ADVISED BY CHARGE OF DEPARTMENT'S NOTE AS PROVIDED

PARA 2 REFTEL. FRANCIS WAS UNAWARE OF THE NOTE BUT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD NOT MADE A PUBLIC DENIAL. CHARGE POINTED OUT THAT A DENIAL WOULD ONLY ESTABLISH AMERICAN PRESS INTEREST IN AN ISSUE IT IS NOT AWARE OF AT THIS POINT, I.E. DENIAL WOULD IN FACT CREATE A FLURRY OF STORIES. FRANCIS THEN SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE DEPARTMENT'S NOTE COULD BE MADE PUBLIC BY THE GOJ IN SOME FASHION WITHIN A CONTEXT WHICH WOULD AVOID THE ABOVE PROBLEM. CHARGE SUGGESTED THIS MIGHT BE SO BUT HOPED JAMAICAN EMBASSY WOULD FIRST CHECK WITH THE DEPARTMNET AS MATTER OF COURTESY.

3. CONVERSATION WENT BACK AND FORTH FOR SOME TIME ON THE ORIGINS OF THE "PRESS CAMPAIGN" WITH ALL THE USUAL DISCLAIMERS AND ASSURANCES OFFERED TO FRANCIS. FRANCIS AT ONE POINT COMMENTED THAT HE PERSONALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT IT WAS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY USG OR ANYONE ELSE COULD ORCHESTRATE SUCH A CAMPAIGN. NONETHELESS MANY AND PERHAPS MOST OF JAMAICA'S "LEADERS" DO BELIEVE IN THE EMBSTENCE OF THAT CAMPAIGN -- IF ONLY BECAUSE SUCH IS THE ONLY EXPLANATION THAT CAN BE OFFERED FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY INTEREST IN JAMAICA BY THE AMERICAN PRESS. ON THIS POINT HE ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD WHY SUCH INTEREST EXISTED BUT DOUBTED IF MANY OTHERS DID. THE IMPORTANT POINT, HE ADDED, "IS THE PERCEPTION, NOT THE FACT".

4. COMMENT: FRANCIS, WHO IS ALWAYS EXTREMELY FRIENDLY, PROFESSIONAL, AND TACTFUL, WAS IN A VERY MELANCHOLY MOOD THROUGHOUT THE MEETING AND SEEMED NEAR THE EDGE OF DESPAIR REGARDING TRENDS IN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE USG ON THE ONE HAND AND THE CARIBBEAN ON THE OTHER WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO GUYANA AND JAMAICA. FORMER CAME UP IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION OF CUBANA CRASH WHICH IS BEING REPORTED ON SEPARATELY.  
DORRANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE  
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